

The College Readiness Resource

Student Edition

by

Sara E. Stewart

Koi and Quill Publishing

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First Edition

Why This Resource Matters

Moving from the home you have known or starting college brings more independence and new experiences. It can also change what parents, guardians, or other trusted people can access without the student's permission.

The College Readiness Resource: Student Edition is a practical resource for students learning to manage college life, shared spaces, personal safety, important documents, health information, transportation, campus resources, and everyday responsibilities.

Whether a student lives in a dorm, shares an apartment, commutes, studies away from home, or simply navigates campus life, this resource helps keep essential information organized and accessible.

This resource is not about fear. It is about readiness, agency, and self-advocacy. Questions, problems, and unexpected situations are a normal part of living away from home and becoming more independent. Preparation gives students and families a plan to follow when those situations arise.

Knowing what to do, whom to contact, and where to find important information allows everyone to respond with greater confidence and less anxiety.

Information Access After Age 18

For school records, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) may affect access to grades, billing, housing information, and other education records. For medical matters, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) may affect who can receive information from doctors, hospitals, clinics, insurers, and pharmacies.

That is why it helps to organize important information before it is needed. This resource provides one place to list key contacts, document locations, emergency details, and questions to ask before a stressful situation occurs.

Students should talk with trusted people about how they can help during an emergency and which permission forms or authorizations may be needed.

This resource is for informational and personal-organization purposes only. It does not replace legal, medical, academic, financial, safety, or emergency-services advice. Contact the appropriate college, healthcare provider, insurer, attorney, or qualified professional to verify requirements.

A Note to the Student

Having one reliable place to keep important information can make life away from home easier to manage.

This resource is a practical backup system designed to help you organize essential details before and during your transition into a new environment.

Do not feel pressured to complete every page at once. Start with the sections that matter most right now. During the first few months, add information as you settle in.

Keep this resource in a safe but easy-to-find place. When something important comes up, you should not have to search through emails, apps, screenshots, texts, or memory to find what you need.

Use a pencil so information can be updated easily. Review the resource periodically and replace outdated contacts, policies, and dates.

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My Information

Full name:

Preferred name:

Date of birth:

Cell phone:

Email:

College/ University:

Campus email:

Student ID number:

Dorm/building/apartment name:

Address:

Room/apartment number:

Move-in date:

Move-out date:

Expected graduation year:

Immunization Records & Campus Health Requirements

Some schools require immunization records before registration, housing, clinical programs, athletics, or study abroad. Keep an accessible copy even if the school already has one.

During an outbreak in a dorm, classroom, campus job, athletic program, or travel group, do not wait on a records office or health center to determine whether you have been immunized.

Vaccines or records to ask about:

- ☐ MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella)
- ☐ Meningococcal/meningitis
- ☐ HPV (human papillomavirus)
- ☐ Hepatitis B
- ☐ Tdap/tetanus
- ☐ Varicella/chickenpox
- ☐ COVID-19 or flu, if required or recommended

Emergency Contacts

In an Emergency

Call 911 or campus emergency services first if there is immediate danger, serious injury, chest pain, trouble breathing, loss of consciousness, severe allergic reaction, suicidal crisis, assault, fire, or any situation that feels unsafe.

Campus emergency number:

Local police non-emergency:

Campus security:

Nearest emergency room:

Nearest urgent care:

Primary care doctor:

Primary dentist:

Orthodontist:

Eye doctor:

Personal Emergency Contacts

List these contacts in the order they should be called. Make sure they have one another's current information.

First Emergency Contact

Name:

Relationship:

Phone:

Alternate phone:

Email:

Second Emergency Contact

Name:

Relationship:

Phone:

Alternate phone:

Email:

Personal Emergency Contacts

Third Emergency Contact

Name:

Relationship:

Phone:

Alternate phone:

Email:

Fourth Emergency Contact

Name:

Relationship:

Phone:

Alternate phone:

Email:

Right Contact for Different Situations

Medical emergency:

Mental health crisis:

Resident assistant or housing issue:

Car accident or transportation issue:

Money or lost-wallet issue:

Academic issue:

Legal or safety concern:

Important Information My Emergency Contacts Should Know

Medical conditions:

Allergies:

Current medications:

Preferred hospital:

Location of health-insurance card copy:

Emergency Medical Coverage

These questions are not for deciding what to do during an emergency. In an emergency, call 911 or the appropriate emergency number first. Use this section to understand coverage before it is needed, especially if living far from home, attending school in a rural area where advanced medical care may be in another town or region, traveling, studying abroad, hiking, playing sports, or spending time in remote areas. Assess the need for additional coverage to avoid large out-of-pocket bills.

- ☐ Does my health insurance cover air ambulance transportation?
- ☐ Should I consider a separate air ambulance, emergency transport, or medical evacuation membership/insurance policy?
- ☐ Are there preferred or in-network emergency transportation providers in the school's area?
- ☐ Does the college provide emergency transportation to a medical facility?
- ☐ Does my insurance cover medical care outside the United States?

- ☐ If studying or traveling outside the country, do I need international health insurance?
- ☐ Does my insurance cover medical transportation back home or to another hospital?
- ☐ Does my program, school, or exchange organization provide travel medical coverage?

Insurance member-services phone:

School/program contact for travel coverage:



Advance Directives & Medical Decision Support

These forms are not just for older adults. Once a student is 18, parents or guardians may not automatically have authority to receive medical information or make healthcare decisions.

Use this section to note whether important medical permission or decision-making documents exist and where they are located.

Advance Directives are key legal documents that let individuals express their medical care preferences if they cannot communicate. Many overlook these documents until they're needed. Legal requirements vary by state, and healthcare organizations may have their own procedures for accepting and storing these documents, so it's vital to know the rules/laws that apply to you. These documents can usually be found online by searching your state's legal requirements. Consulting healthcare professionals or a legal expert ensures the forms are correct and reflect your wishes. Preparing these documents can help clarify your wishes and identify who may assist with medical decision making if you are not able to do so yourself.

Doctor/clinic with copy:

School office or portal location:

Attorney or legal contact, if applicable:

My chosen medical decision-support person is already listed as an emergency contact.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If no:

Name:

Relationship:

Phone:

Important Documents & Insurance Information

Use this section to track important identification, documents, and insurance information. Store documents that are not carried daily in a secure location. For security reasons, do not write Social Security numbers, passwords, full bank account numbers, or full credit card numbers in this resource.

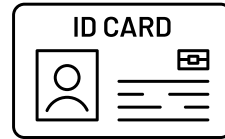
Everyday Identification & Cards

- ☐ Driver's license or state ID
- ☐ Student ID
- ☐ Health-insurance card
- ☐ Debit or credit card, if used

Make sure your primary emergency contacts know how to access essential documents if needed.

Important Documents Stored Securely

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Birth certificate
- ☐ Social Security card
- ☐ Vehicle title
- ☐ Lease or housing agreement



Consider purchasing a fireproof lockbox or safe for important documents and personal property.valuables

Insurance Information

Health insurance company:

Member Services Phone:

Policyholder name:

Policy/group number:

Member ID:

Portal/App name:

Secondary health insurance company:

Member Service phone number:

Policyholder name:

Policy/group Number:

Member ID:

Portal /App Name:

Dental insurance

Insurance company:

Member services phone:

Policy/group number:

Member ID:

Portal/app name:

Vision insurance

Insurance company:

Member services phone:

Policy/group number:

Member ID:

Portal/app name:

Renters Insurance, if Applicable

Insurance company:

Policy/contact phone:

Policy number:

Coverage notes:

Auto Insurance

Insurance company:

Claims phone number:

Policy number:

VIN:

Insurance card kept in vehicle?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Insurance card available electronically on phone, if allowed in your state?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Roadside assistance included?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Roadside assistance contact number:

Transportation, Vehicle Information & Maintenance

Use this section to keep transportation details, vehicle information, and maintenance reminders in one place.

Transportation Basics

Primary transportation method:

Campus shuttle/bus app or website:

Parking permit information:

Parking Location/Lot Number:

Rideshare pickup areas:

Bike/scooter storage location:

Move-In Support & Transportation Exceptions

Move-in requires more than choosing what to pack. Decide who can physically help, how belongings will be transported, and what the student will do if family or friends cannot come.

- ☐ Confirm who is available to help on move-in day.
- ☐ Ask the college whether volunteers, carts, elevators, loading zones, or scheduled move-in times are available.
- ☐ Arrange a backup plan if the original helper becomes unavailable.
- ☐ Keep medications, identification, keys, documents, and other essentials with the student rather than packed out of reach.
- ☐ Verify whether first-year students may bring vehicles to campus.
- ☐ If vehicles are restricted, ask whether hardship, disability, employment, family-care, or transportation exceptions are available.
- ☐ Apply for parking permits or exceptions before move-in and keep the approval accessible.
- ☐ Plan how the student will travel home or leave campus if a vehicle is not available.

Vehicle Information (if applicable)

Make/model/year:

License plate:

VIN:

Tire size:

Spare tire/jack location:

Preferred mechanic:

Mechanic phone:



Vehicle Maintenance Checklist

- ☐ Oil change completed

Date/mileage: _____

- ☐ Tire pressure checked (psi located on the driver's side door jamb or frame)

Date: _____

- ☐ Registration renewal date noted

Date: _____

- ☐ Inspection/emissions date noted, if applicable

Date: _____

- ☐ Battery checked

Date: _____

- ☐ Wipers checked/replaced

Date: _____

- ☐ Emergency kit updated

Date: _____

Vehicle Safety at College

College campuses can be common places for vehicle break-ins. Do not assume habits that feel safe at home are safe in a campus parking lot.

- ☐ I lock my vehicle
- ☐ I do not leave bags, electronics, wallets, keys, or valuables visible
- ☐ I remove important items before leaving the vehicle overnight
- ☐ I park in well-lit areas when possible
- ☐ I know who to call if my vehicle is broken into
- ☐ I do not store vehicle title, spare keys, or sensitive documents in the vehicle

Vehicle Emergency Kit Checklist

- ☐ Jumper cables or portable jump starter
- ☐ Tire inflator
- ☐ Tire pressure gauge
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Extra batteries or charging cord
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Blanket
- ☐ Bottled water

If a Vehicle Accident Happens

An accident away from home can feel overwhelming. Safety comes first. Do not argue about fault at the scene.

- ☐ Move to a safe location if possible and turn on hazard lights.
- ☐ Call 911 when anyone may be injured, the scene is dangerous, traffic is blocked, or local law requires a report.
- ☐ Exchange names, contact information, driver's-license details, insurance information, and vehicle information.
- ☐ Photograph the vehicles, damage, license plates, roadway, signs, and surrounding area when it is safe.
- ☐ Write down the location, time, weather, and names of witnesses.
- ☐ Do not sign anything or make a recorded statement you do not understand.
- ☐ Contact the insurance company and follow its reporting instructions.
- ☐ Notify campus security if the accident occurred on campus or involves campus property.
- ☐ Call a trusted person if help is needed with transportation, towing, medical care, or next steps.

Insurance claims number:

Campus security/non-emergency number:

- ☐ Non-perishable snack
- ☐ Phone charger
- ☐ Emergency contact information
- ☐ Reflective vest or warning triangle
- ☐ Ice scraper, if needed
- ☐ Umbrella or poncho
- ☐ Basic tools
- ☐ Copy of auto insurance card

Most vehicles have an out-of-sight area where these items can be stored when an enclosed trunk is not available.

Safety Note

Do not store a vehicle title, spare keys, passwords, account numbers, or sensitive financial documents in this resource or in the vehicle.

Campus & Local Resources

Use this section to keep important school and local contact information in one place. Consider saving these as contacts in your phone.

Campus Safety / Security

Campus safety phone:

After-hours emergency number:

Non-emergency number:

Location/office:

Student Health Center

Phone: _____

Location: _____

Hours: _____

Portal/app name: _____

Counseling / Mental Health Services

Phone: _____

Location: _____

Crisis or after-hours number: _____

Appointment instructions: _____

Disability / Accessibility Services

Office name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Location: _____

Accommodation contact: _____

Academic Advising

Advisor's name:

Phone/email:

Office/location:

Appointment instructions:

Financial Aid / Student Accounts

Financial aid phone:

Student accounts/ billing phone:

Portal/app name:

Office/location:

Housing / Resident Life

Housing Office phone:

Resident Life contact:

Resident Assistant contact/ room number:

Maintenance request instructions:

After-hours housing issues phone:

Campus Parking

Parking office phone:

Permit information:

Campus shuttle info:

Transportation app/website:

Local Resources

Nearest hospital:

Nearest urgent care:

Nearest pharmacy:

Housing & Roommate Information

Roommate & Shared Living Information

Use this section to keep roommate contact details and note any shared living agreements.

Roommate Information

Roommate 1 Name:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Roommate 2 Name:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Roommate 3 Name:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Shared Living Conversation

Have these conversations early in the living situation. Check each topic after it has been discussed.

- ☐ Cleaning expectations
 - ☐ Quiet hours and sleep schedules
 - ☐ Guests and overnight visitors
 - ☐ Privacy, personal space, and knocking before entering
 - ☐ Food storage, shared food, and labeling
 - ☐ Shared appliances or supplies
 - ☐ Locking doors and windows
 - ☐ What to do if someone is sick
 - ☐ How to handle conflict and communicate problems early
 - ☐ Borrowing items and respecting boundaries
 - ☐ Temperature and comfort
 - ☐ Rent, bills, move-out responsibilities, and early move-out expectations
-
-
-
-
-

Technology & Account Recovery

Use this section to keep track of important devices, apps, and account recovery information. Do not write passwords in this resource.

Primary Devices

Laptop brand/model:

Laptop serial number:

Phone model:

Tablet/e-reader model:

Other device:



Cell Phone Plan / Carrier

Carrier:

Account holder name:

Customer service number:

App/website:

Phone insurance/protection plan?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Other Important Contacts

Bank customer service:

Employer/work contact:

Important School Accounts

School portal name:

School email:

Learning platform:

Library account/resource:

Student billing portal:

Housing portal:

Health center portal:

Account Recovery Information

Primary recovery email:

Backup recovery email:

Phone number used for verification:

Authenticator app used?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Password manager used?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Password manager name:

Important Reminder

Do not write passwords, security answers, PINs, or full account numbers in this resource. Use a secure password manager or another protected system for login information.

Lost or Broken Device Plan

- ☐ Know how to lock or locate phone
- ☐ Know how to lock or locate laptop
- ☐ Know who to contact for school tech support
- ☐ Back up important files
- ☐ Keep charger information accessible
- ☐ Know device warranty or protection plan details

School tech support phone/email:

Device protection/warranty contact:

Your Phone Is Part of Your Adult Life

Your phone may now be used for school, employment, banking, healthcare, housing, identification, and professional communication. Protect your digital reputation.

Intimate photographs, sexually explicit messages, drunken videos, threats, harassment, or offensive posts can be saved, copied, forwarded, or posted publicly. Even disappearing messages can be captured. Once something is sent, the sender cannot control where it goes or who eventually sees it.

What feels private at eighteen could later affect personal safety, relationships, education, or employment.

Possessing or sharing a sexual image of anyone under eighteen can have serious legal consequences, even if the image was originally shared willingly.

Your phone should not become a permanent record of a temporary decision.

Digital-Reputation Check

- ☐ I pause before posting or sending.
- ☐ I assume screenshots are possible.
- ☐ I protect private images and personal information.
- ☐ I know how to report harassment, threats, impersonation, or nonconsensual sharing.
- ☐ I review privacy and location-sharing settings regularly.

Before Classes Start

There are so many things to do before classes begin. These lists will guide you to questions you may still need answered.

Course Access

- ☐ I can log in to the school portal
- ☐ I can access the learning platform
- ☐ I can access my school email
- ☐ I know where course announcements are posted
- ☐ I know where assignments will be submitted
- ☐ I know how to contact tech support if access fails

Class Schedule Check

- ☐ I reviewed my class schedule
- ☐ I checked class days and times
- ☐ I checked classroom locations or online links
- ☐ I checked whether any class locations changed
- ☐ I checked the time needed to get between classes
- ☐ I know which classes are online, hybrid, or in person
- ☐ I know the class add, drop, withdraw deadlines and where to go on campus if needed

Syllabus Review

- ☐ I found the syllabus for each class, if available
- ☐ I checked required books and materials
- ☐ I checked attendance expectations
- ☐ I checked late work policies
- ☐ I checked exam, quiz, or project dates
- ☐ I checked grading policies
- ☐ I checked office hours or instructor contact information

Books & Materials

- ☐ I know which books are required
- ☐ I know which books are optional
- ☐ I checked rental, used, digital, or library options
- ☐ I obtained my books and kept receipts if needed for returns or reimbursement
- ☐ I checked whether access codes are required
- ☐ I checked required supplies, software, lab materials, or equipment
- ☐ I know when I need the materials

Before the First Class

- ☐ I know where I am going
- ☐ I have what I need for the first class
- ☐ I know if I am taking a laptop or a pen and notebooks
- ☐ I have what I need to carry my belongings to classes
- ☐ I know where to look if instruction changes
- ☐ I know what to do if I cannot attend or access class
- ☐ I know where I can eat lunch in time or whether I need to bring lunch

Classes & Academic Support

Use this section to keep class information, advisor contacts, and academic support resources in one place.

Class Schedule

Class:

Instructor:

Days/time:

Location/online link:

Office hours:

Class:

Instructor:

Days/time:

Location/online link:

Office hours:

Class:

Instructor:

Days/Time:

Location/online link:

Office hours:

Class:

Instructor:

Days/Time:

Location/online link:

Office hours:

Class:

Instructor:

Days/Time:

Location/online link:

Office hours:

Class:

Instructor:

Days/Time:

Location/online link:

Class Information, Continued

Office hours:

Additional Class

Class:

Instructor:

Days/Time:

Location/online link:

Office hours:

Academic Advisor

Advisor name:

Phone/email:

Office/location:

Appointment instructions:

Academic Support Resources

Tutoring center:

Writing center:

Math/science support:

Library research help:

Study skills/academic coaching:

Disability/accessibility services contact:

Important Academic Dates

Add/drop deadline:

Withdrawal deadline:

Midterms:

Finals:

When to Ask for Help Checklist

- ☐ Missing assignments
- ☐ Struggling with class material
- ☐ Falling behind in reading
- ☐ Low test or quiz grade
- ☐ Health issue affecting class
- ☐ Mental health issue affecting class
- ☐ Need accommodations
- ☐ Confused about major or course plan
- ☐ Trouble reaching instructor
- ☐ Repeated absences or lateness
- ☐ Difficulty understanding the instructor's expectations



College Expectations & Terminology

College Expectations

- ☐ Attend class regularly and arrive on time.
- ☐ Read the syllabus and follow assignment deadlines.
- ☐ Check school email and course platforms often.
- ☐ Ask questions and seek help early.
- ☐ Participate and communicate respectfully.
- ☐ Practice academic integrity; do not cheat or plagiarize.
- ☐ Manage time and balance school with daily life.
- ☐ Know how to register for, add, drop, or withdraw from classes within deadlines.
- ☐ Take responsibility for learning.
- ☐ Follow campus rules and student-conduct policies.
- ☐ Establish a practical self-care routine.

College Terminology

- ☐ Syllabus: The course roadmap, including rules, dates, assignments, and grading.
- ☐ Credit hour: A unit used to measure course load and progress.
- ☐ Major: The main subject studied to earn a degree.
- ☐ General education: Required classes outside the major.
- ☐ Elective: A class chosen outside required coursework.
- ☐ Advisor: A staff or faculty member who helps with academic planning.
- ☐ Add/drop period: The short window when students can change classes.
- ☐ Transcript: The official record of classes and grades.
- ☐ GPA: Grade point average.
- ☐ Academic probation: A warning status for low academic performance.
- ☐ Full-time/part-time: Enrollment status based on the number of credits taken.
- ☐ Work-study: A campus job tied to financial aid.
- ☐ Plagiarism: Using someone else's words, work, or ideas without proper credit.

Safety Planning

Use this section to think through basic safety steps before they are needed.

Personal Safety Basics

- ☐ I know the campus emergency number
- ☐ I know the local emergency number
- ☐ I know the campus security location
- ☐ I know how to request a safety escort, if offered
- ☐ I know emergency call box locations, if available
- ☐ I know safe ride or late-night transportation options
- ☐ I keep my emergency contacts updated

Going Out Safety Plan

Before going out, I'll have a basic plan.

- ☐ I'll know where I am going
- ☐ I'll know who I am going with
- ☐ I'll know how I am getting there
- ☐ I'll know how I am getting back
- ☐ I'll make sure I have a fully charged phone
- ☐ I'll keep my phone accessible, not buried in a bag
- ☐ I'll share my location or trip status with a trusted person

Safety Planning, Continued

- ☐ I'll have backup transportation money or a ride plan.
- ☐ I'll know how to use the emergency/SOS feature on my phone.
- ☐ I'll trust my gut if something feels off.

Phone & Location Safety

- ☐ I'll use location sharing only with someone I trust.
- ☐ I'll pay attention to unknown tracker alerts on my phone.
- ☐ I will not share my location with anyone who makes me feel monitored, pressured, or unsafe.

Drink & Personal Safety

- ☐ I'll watch my drink being made or make it myself.
- ☐ I'll keep my drink with me.
- ☐ If I put a drink down or lose sight of it, I do not go back to it.
- ☐ I do not accept an open drink from someone I do not fully trust.
- ☐ I'll stay aware of my belongings and surroundings.
- ☐ I'll leave if a situation feels uncomfortable, pressured, or unsafe.

Group and Rideshare Safety

Group Safety

- ☐ Go with people you trust.
- ☐ Agree on a check-in plan before going out.
- ☐ Pair up if the group separates.
- ☐ Make sure everyone has a safe way home.
- ☐ Do not leave someone behind when it is safe to stay and help.
- ☐ Text or call when everyone gets home safely.

Rideshare Safety

- ☐ Confirm the driver's name, license plate, and vehicle before getting in.
- ☐ Match the car in the app before opening the door.
- ☐ Sit in the back seat when possible.
- ☐ Keep your phone accessible.
- ☐ Share the trip status with a trusted person when the feature is available.
- ☐ Cancel the ride or ask to exit in a safe public place if something feels wrong.
- ☐ Use the app's emergency feature or call 911 if there is immediate danger.

Rideshare Door and Exit Safety

Most rideshare and taxi trips are completed safely. Ask the driver to confirm the name of the person being picked up, and make sure the vehicle and license plate match the app.

Many vehicles lock automatically while moving. A different issue is the rear child-safety lock, which can prevent a back-seat passenger from opening the door from inside.

Before entering, glance at the rear door edge as you open it. If the child-safety lock is engaged, correct the issue before getting in. If anything looks unusual or feels wrong, cancel the ride and choose another safe way home.

If the ride has stopped but you cannot exit and you feel unsafe, use the app’s emergency feature. Call 911 if there is immediate danger, make noise, and draw attention from people nearby.

This information is not meant to create fear. It is meant to support awareness and quick action.

Rideshare or taxi company:

Campus safe-ride number:

Trusted person to contact:

If for whatever reason you cannot exit after the ride stops and you feel unsafe, use the rideshare app's emergency feature, or call 911 if there is immediate danger, make noise, and get attention from people nearby. This note is not meant to create fear, but to encourage awareness.

Campus Safety Resources

Campus safety phone number:

Safety escort service:

Safe ride program:

Emergency alert system name:

Where to sign up for alerts:

Local police non-emergency:

Local fire department non-emergency:

Local taxi/rideshare:

Housing Safety

- ☐ Lock the door after entering
- ☐ Lock door when sleeping
- ☐ Lock the door when leaving
- ☐ Do not prop outside doors open
- ☐ Know fire exits
- ☐ Know severe weather shelter area
- ☐ Know visitor/guest rules
- ☐ Report broken locks or lights for repair

Weather & Emergency Plans

Local severe weather alerts app/source:

Tornado/severe weather shelter location:

Fire evacuation meeting place:

Power outage plan:

Emergency supplies location:

Stay Aware of Your Surroundings

Situational awareness is not about living in fear. It is about noticing what is happening around you so you can avoid preventable injuries and respond sooner when something feels wrong.

- ☐ Keep your phone down and your attention up while walking across campus, through parking areas, or in unfamiliar places.
- ☐ Remove earbuds or keep the volume low enough to hear traffic, alarms, approaching people, bicycles, scooters, and other activity.
- ☐ Use marked walkways and look in every direction before crossing streets, driveways, or bike lanes.
- ☐ Avoid texting while walking on stairs or near traffic.
- ☐ Know where you are going before you begin walking whenever possible.
- ☐ If you feel followed or unsafe, move toward a populated, well-lit place and contact campus security, 911, or a trusted person.
- ☐ Trust discomfort without assuming every unfamiliar person is a threat.

Phone down. Head up. Stay aware.

Campus Weapons & Firearms Policies

Laws and campus policies concerning firearms, concealed carry, and other weapons vary by state and school and may change. Rules can differ for classrooms, residence halls, events, parking areas, and vehicles.

This section is not about judging anyone's beliefs. It is about knowing the law and the school's current policy before choosing housing, attending events, storing anything in a vehicle, or raising a safety concern.

- ☐ I know where to find my school's weapons and firearms policy.
- ☐ I know whether concealed carry is allowed on campus.
- ☐ I know whether firearms are allowed in classrooms.
- ☐ I know whether firearms are allowed in residence halls.
- ☐ I know whether firearms may be stored in vehicles on campus.
- ☐ I know whether open carry is allowed on campus.
- ☐ I know whom to contact with policy questions.
- ☐ I will not assume that a permit or rule from another location applies on this campus.

Campus Violence and Active Threats

This information is included because safety preparation matters, not to frighten students or families. Being prepared means having a basic plan before one is needed.

Federal safety guidance commonly uses the Run, Hide, Fight framework for an active threat. Every situation is different. Follow official alerts and instructions when available, and use your judgment based on what is happening around you.

Run, if it is safe to leave

- ☐ Know at least two exits from classrooms, housing, work areas, and common spaces.
- ☐ Leave belongings behind.
- ☐ Move away from the threat.
- ☐ Warn others without delaying your escape.
- ☐ Call 911 when safe.
- ☐ Keep your hands visible when law enforcement arrives.

Campus emergency-alert system:

Where to report a safety concern:

Active-Threat Response, Continued

Hide, if you cannot leave safely

- ☐ Silence phones and devices.
- ☐ Lock or block the door, if possible.
- ☐ Turn off lights, if safe to do so.
- ☐ Stay low, quiet, and out of sight.

Fight, only as a last resort

- ☐ Act only when your life is in immediate danger.
- ☐ Work with others if possible.
- ☐ Use available objects to distract, block, or defend.

Additional Safety Reminders

- ☐ Sign up for campus emergency alerts.
- ☐ Pay attention to exits when entering buildings.
- ☐ Follow official emergency alerts and instructions when available.
- ☐ Keep hands visible and follow law-enforcement instructions.
- ☐ Do not return to the area until officials say it is safe.

In a life-threatening situation, the safest choice may change quickly. Use your judgment, follow official instructions when possible, and make the best decision based on the situation.

Consent & Campus Policy

Consent means clear, voluntary agreement. A person cannot give true consent if they are asleep, unconscious, pressured, threatened, afraid, or impaired by alcohol or drugs.

- ☐ I know where to find my school's sexual consent policy.
- ☐ I know how my school defines consent.
- ☐ I know where to find Title IX or student conduct information.
- ☐ I know how to report a concern or ask questions.
- ☐ I know whether my school requires consent training, an agreement, or a student-policy acknowledgment.
- ☐ I know how to report unsafe behavior.

Title IX office/contact:

Campus reporting website or phone:

Hazing Awareness

Hazing is not limited to fraternities and sororities. It can happen in athletic teams, bands, clubs, service groups, social groups, campus organizations, work groups, friend groups, and informal student traditions.

Hazing can involve pressure to prove loyalty, keep secrets, follow orders, drink alcohol, use substances, stay silent, accept humiliation, give up sleep, perform tasks, steal or do something that threatens mental or physical health to be accepted by a group.

A group does not have to call something “hazing” for it to be harmful.

Things to Watch For

- ☐ I am told not to tell anyone what is happening
- ☐ I am pressured to drink alcohol or use substances
- ☐ I am expected to do something humiliating or degrading
- ☐ I am told discomfort, fear, or pain means I am “committed”
- ☐ I am isolated from friends, family, or other support
- ☐ I am deprived of sleep, food, water, medication, or rest

- ☐ I am pressured to ignore my own safety or someone else's.
- ☐ I am told the group matters more than my judgment.
- ☐ I am afraid I will be rejected if I refuse.
- ☐ I feel like I cannot leave.

When to Leave

- ☐ If I feel unsafe.
- ☐ If someone is being forced or pressured.
- ☐ If alcohol or substances are being used as a test.
- ☐ If someone is sick, vomiting, unconscious, injured, confused, or unable to consent.
- ☐ If people are being told to keep secrets about what happened.
- ☐ If I am being pressured to do something I would not choose freely.

When to Tell

Reporting is not betrayal when someone may be harmed or die. It may protect you, other students, or the next person pressured into the same situation.

Hazing: Reporting and Support

Reporting hazing is not betrayal when someone may be harmed or die. It may protect you, other students, or the next person pressured into the same situation.

- ☐ Tell campus safety or security.
- ☐ Tell an RA, housing staff member, coach, advisor, or faculty member.
- ☐ Tell student conduct or the appropriate campus office.
- ☐ Tell a trusted adult or emergency contact.
- ☐ Call 911 if someone is in immediate danger.
- ☐ Seek medical help if alcohol poisoning, injury, overdose, or loss of consciousness is possible.

Important Reminder

Acceptance into a group should not require surrendering personal judgment, safety, dignity, or health. School policies and federal or state laws may apply. Discipline or criminal consequences may result.

Campus anonymous tip line:

Campus conduct or safety office:

Call 911 when there is immediate danger.

Personal Boundary Support

Trusted person to call if uncomfortable:

Primary local responder:

Backup local responder:

Campus office for safety concerns:

Title IX office/contact, if needed:

Local police non-emergency:

Code Words and Phrases

Create a private family verification word or short phrase to confirm that a message, request, or person is legitimate. Do not write the word in this resource.

Create a separate emergency word, phrase, or text that means, "I need help leaving this situation now." Decide before move-in who can respond locally when a parent or guardian cannot.

The local plan may include a trusted nearby adult, dependable sober peer, resident assistant, residence-hall staff member, campus security officer, or safe-ride service. Call 911 or campus security if there is immediate danger.

Mental Health Support

Use this section to identify support before stress becomes a crisis.

Support Contacts

Counseling center phone:

Campus crisis or after-hours number:

Student health center phone:

Trusted person to call:

Trusted person phone:

Backup trusted person:

Crisis Support

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Call or text 988

Emergency: Call 911 if there is immediate danger

Campus crisis or after-hours number:

When I May Need Support

- ☐ I feel overwhelmed and cannot calm down
- ☐ I am not sleeping for several nights
- ☐ I am sleeping excessively or neglecting hygiene and daily responsibilities
- ☐ I am skipping classes or falling behind
- ☐ I feel isolated or disconnected
- ☐ I am crying often or feel emotionally numb
- ☐ I am using alcohol, drugs, food, or spending to cope
- ☐ I am having panic symptoms
- ☐ I am worried that I may harm myself or someone else
- ☐ I need help but do not know where to start

My Early Warning Signs

When I am not doing well, I may notice and should pay attention to: (examples: no appetite, over or undereating, persistent sadness, hair loss, staying in bed too long)

Student Life Essentials Suggestions

Room Essentials

- ☐ Bedding
- ☐ Pillow
- ☐ Scarf or Bonnet
- ☐ Mattress cover
- ☐ Towels
- ☐ Laundry basket or bag
- ☐ Hangers
- ☐ Storage bins
- ☐ Small fan, if allowed
- ☐ Desk lamp
- ☐ Mini fridge, if allowed
- ☐ Microwave, if allowed
- ☐ Any permitted furniture.

Room Decor & Comfort

- ☐ Photos
- ☐ Wall-safe hooks or strips
- ☐ Rugs
- ☐ Throw blanket
- ☐ Decorative pillow
- ☐ Posters/art, if allowed
- ☐ String lights, if allowed
- ☐ Small plant, if allowed
- ☐ Storage baskets
- ☐ Personal comfort item

Food & Daily Use Items

- ☐ Reusable water bottle
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Basic dishes/cups
- ☐ Utensils
- ☐ Food storage containers
- ☐ Can opener, if needed
- ☐ Coffee/tea supplies, if allowed

Add-ons:

Comfort & Wellness Items

- ☐ Heating pad, if allowed
- ☐ Hot water bottle
- ☐ Instant ice pack
- ☐ Extra blanket
- ☐ Eye mask
- ☐ Earplugs
- ☐ Basic first aid kit
- ☐ Thermometer

Bathroom & Toiletries

- ☐ Toothbrush/toothpaste
- ☐ Shampoo/conditioner
- ☐ Shower Cap
- ☐ Soap/body wash
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Shower shoes
- ☐ Bath Towels/Washcloths
- ☐ Personal cleansing wipes
- ☐ Blow Dryer/ Flat Iron
- ☐ Feminine hygiene products

Desk & Office Supplies

- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Highlighters
- ☐ Notebooks
- ☐ Folders
- ☐ Sticky notes
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Planner or calendar
- ☐ Stapler
- ☐ Paper clips
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Backpack or tote bag

Technology Basics

- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Laptop charger
- ☐ Phone charger
- ☐ Surge protector
- ☐ Extension cord, if allowed
- ☐ Earbuds/headphones
- ☐ Portable charger
- ☐ USB drive or external backup
- ☐ Printer, if needed
- ☐ Printer paper, if needed
- ☐ Ink/toner, if needed

Laundry & Cleaning

- ☐ Laundry detergent
- ☐ Bleach, if needed
- ☐ Stain remover
- ☐ Disinfecting wipes
- ☐ Trash bags
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Small trash can
- ☐ Cleaning spray, if allowed
- ☐ Iron or steamer

Basic Pantry & Grocery Starter List

Use this list to plan simple food basics. Check housing rules before bringing cooking appliances.

Basic Seasonings

- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Black pepper
- ☐ Garlic powder
- ☐ Onion powder
- ☐ Cinnamon
- ☐ Italian seasoning
- ☐ Red pepper flakes, if used

Simple Food Staples

- ☐ Oatmeal
- ☐ Rice
- ☐ Pasta or noodles
- ☐ Soup or easy meals
- ☐ Peanut butter or nut/seed butter
- ☐ Crackers or bread, if used
- ☐ Shelf-stable milk or creamer, if used
- ☐ Tea, coffee, or cocoa
- ☐ Snacks

Refrigerated Basics (if needed)

- ☐ Milk or milk alternative
- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Yogurt
- ☐ Cheese
- ☐ Fruit
- ☐ Vegetables
- ☐ Lunch meat or protein option
- ☐ Leftover containers

Kitchen & Food Supplies

- ☐ Cooking oil or spray
- ☐ Condiments
- ☐ Food storage containers
- ☐ Food storage bags
- ☐ Paper plates or bowls, if needed
- ☐ Napkins or paper towels
- ☐ Dish soap
- ☐ Sponge or dish cloth

Pantry & Grocery Notes

Easy meals I can make

Favorite affordable snacks

Monthly Money Snapshot

Use this page to keep track of basic money needs without writing passwords, full card numbers, or bank account numbers.

Expected money available each month:

Expected expenses each month:

Emergency money available?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Working on it

Expenses to Remember

- ☐ Food
- ☐ Gas or transportation
- ☐ Laundry
- ☐ Prescriptions
- ☐ School supplies
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Subscriptions

Monthly Money Snapshot, Continued

- ☐ Personal care
- ☐ Parking
- ☐ Clothing
- ☐ Social activities
- ☐ Unexpected costs

Bills or Due Dates

Item:

Due date:

Item:

Due date:

Item:

Due date:

Money Notes

Storage Planning

If I plan to store items over summer, between semesters, or before moving into other housing, I should make arrangements early. Storage spaces can fill quickly, especially in small towns or rural areas.

- ☐ I know whether I need storage.
- ☐ I checked campus storage options, if offered.
- ☐ I checked local storage-unit availability.
- ☐ I know the cost and payment terms.
- ☐ I know move-out and pickup dates.
- ☐ I know who is helping move items.
- ☐ I labeled boxes clearly.
- ☐ I made a list of stored items.
- ☐ I have photos and an inventory of stored items.
- ☐ I have a written agreement if sharing storage with a roommate or friend.
- ☐ I considered insurance options for my belongings while in storage.

Storage company/contact:

Storage location:

Storage Planning, Continued

Access code/key location for the storage unit:

Move-in date:

Move-out deadline:

Travel/Campus Break Checklist

Use this checklist when leaving campus housing temporarily, traveling home, taking an extended break, or moving out at the end of a term.

- ☐ Pack essential clothing and daily items.
- ☐ Pack medications and medical supplies, if needed.
- ☐ Pack chargers and electronics.
- ☐ Secure important documents before leaving.
- ☐ Clean and secure the living space.
- ☐ Dispose of perishable food.
- ☐ Forward mail, if applicable.
- ☐ Confirm transportation details.
- ☐ Make sure devices are charged before leaving.
- ☐ Know how to re-enter housing or access belongings.
- ☐ Notify a trusted contact when appropriate.
- ☐ Review school and housing instructions.

Tips for College Living

Moving Into Your Dorm or First Apartment

The physical move-in day is one event. The deeper adjustment happens during the days and weeks that follow.

- Meet roommates or neighbors early and discuss guests, quiet hours, shared food, cleaning, and boundaries out loud.
- Learn building basics on day one: laundry, mail and package pickup, maintenance requests, fire exits, and severe-weather shelter locations.
- Give yourself time to adjust to unfamiliar sounds, schedules, people, and routines.
- Make the space feel familiar with photos, a favorite blanket, or another comfort item that follows housing rules.
- For an apartment, confirm utilities, internet service, security responsibilities, and move-in costs before signing or moving in.
- Ask for physical help early if moving alone or if family cannot come.

Sleep While at College

College sleep can be disrupted by studying, roommate schedules, noise, early classes, social activity, and the freedom of having no set bedtime. A basic plan protects attention, mood, health, and academic performance.

- Keep a reasonably consistent wake time, including weekends when possible.
- Use bright light in the morning and dimmer light in the evening to support the body clock.
- Use earplugs, an eye mask, or white noise when appropriate and permitted.
- Keep naps brief and earlier in the day so they do not interfere with nighttime sleep.
- Remember that caffeine can affect sleep for hours. Pay attention to timing and amount.
- Avoid relying on alcohol, cannabis, or unprescribed medication for sleep.
- Seek medical or counseling support when sleep problems persist or interfere with safety, health, or classes.

Food, Energy & Body Changes

College can change how a student eats, moves, sleeps, and manages stress. The goal is not restriction. It is building sustainable habits that support energy and health.

- Build balanced meals when possible with vegetables or fruit, protein, and a satisfying starch or grain.
- Keep affordable foods and snacks available so hunger does not always lead to vending machines or delivery.
- Watch energy drinks, sugary drinks, and alcohol. They can affect hydration, sleep, judgment, and appetite.
- Use walking, stairs, stretching, or short activity breaks when a formal workout is unrealistic.
- Do not routinely skip meals to compensate for eating later. That pattern can worsen hunger and concentration.
- Use campus dining, nutrition, medical, or counseling resources when food access, body image, or eating becomes stressful.

Self-Care Basics for a New Environment

Self-care does not have to be expensive, complicated, or perfect. It can be the small actions that keep daily life from falling apart.

- Build a basic routine that includes hygiene, regular food, movement, medication when prescribed, and adequate sleep.
- Schedule downtime before the calendar becomes overloaded.
- Choose a low-effort stress outlet you actually enjoy, such as music, drawing, walking, exercise, or quiet time.
- Stay connected with people who know you well.
- Learn the difference between needing rest and avoiding a problem. Both are real, but they call for different responses.
- Use campus counseling or health services early when support is needed. Ask about cost, privacy, appointments, and after-hours help.

Handling Uncertainty

Not knowing your major, long-term plan, or eventual destination is common during the transition to college. Uncertainty does not mean failure.

- Focus on the next concrete decision rather than trying to decide your entire future at once.
- Undeclared or undecided status is legitimate. Many students need time and experience before choosing.
- Use academic advising before a problem develops. Exploring options is part of the advisor's role.
- Notice which subjects, tasks, and environments hold your attention and bring out your strengths.
- Ask about deadlines and consequences before changing a major, dropping a class, or withdrawing.
- When uncertainty feels heavy, say it out loud to a trusted person, advisor, mentor, or counselor.

Readiness Reminders

Readiness is not having every answer. It is knowing where to look, what to ask, and when to involve someone else.

- Small problems are easier to handle before they become emergencies.
- A resource is useful only when you know where to find it and how to use it.
- Independence does not mean doing everything alone.
- Good judgment includes asking for help early.
- Plans should be reviewed when contacts, policies, housing, health needs, or transportation change.
- The goal is not perfection. The goal is readiness.

Note Pages

Use these blank pages for notes or to add additional important information to reference at a later date.

Notes

Notes

Notes

“Who to Call For What” Quick Page

Medical issue:

Mental health support:

Housing problem:

Class problem:

Technology login issue:

Lost wallet, credit card, or debit card:

Car problem:

Safety concern:

Emergency: 911 or campus emergency number:

Closest relative or trusted person:

About the Author

Sara E. Stewart is an educator, writer, speaker, and preparedness advocate. Her work brings together experience in health and wellness, safety awareness, private and state investigation, loss control, end-of-life planning, and personal advocacy.

She is a Certified Integrative Wellness Practitioner and Sleep Specialist, Certified Yoga Teacher, and End-of-Life Doula.

"I created The College Readiness Resource to help students and families think beyond packing lists and class schedules. Preparation is not about fear. It is about agency, access to information, and knowing what questions to ask before something urgent happens. This is the resource I wish I had in college."

Sara's work focuses on helping people move through life transitions with clarity, care, and practical wisdom.

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About the Publisher

Koi and Quill Publishing creates thoughtful, practical resources designed to help people prepare for real-life transitions with greater confidence and clarity. Its publications focus on wellness, education, independence, safety, and everyday preparedness.

Each resource is developed to be useful, accessible, and easy to put into action.

The College Readiness Resource was created to help students and families prepare for more than move-in day. It supports the conversations, decisions, and organization needed for life away from home.

Koi and Quill Publishing is an imprint of Zenful Life Living, LLC.

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Final Note

This resource is a reference, not a rulebook. College life will require judgment, adjustment, and decision-making in real time. Use it as a foundation to stay organized, ask better questions, and respond with clarity when situations change.

Not everything will be predictable. Preparation is what gives you options.

Have a good school year!

We welcome feedback and suggestions for future editions at saraestewart.com/contact-sara.

Continue the Family Preparation

The College Readiness Resource: Parent/Guardian Edition supports the conversations and decisions families work through together. Available on the website.